

Appl. No. 10/729,384
Amdt. dated October 24, 2006
Reply to Office action of July 24, 2006

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-2, 11-14, 20, 23,24 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. (b) in view of two different references cited by the Examiner.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 27-30 are allowed, and further claims 3-10, 15-19, 21, 22 and 25 are only objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if re-written in independent form.

Accordingly, in response to this office action, Applicants, without prejudice, have amended the claims, in effect to accept the subject matter that the Examiner has indicated to be allowable. Thus, the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 has been introduced into claim 1, with consequential minor amendments to the dependencies of claims 4 and 5. In the method claims, the subject matter of claim 15 has been introduced into claim 11, with the dependency of claim 16 being correspondingly amended. Similarly, the subject matter of claim 21 has been introduced into claim 20, and the dependency of claim 22 amended.

In view of these amendments to the claims, it is understood that a detailed rebuttal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 is not required.

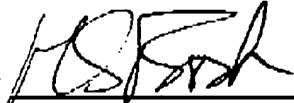
The Examiner had objected to the 150-word limit. An amended abstract, having less than 150 words is provided. Accordingly, it is submitted that the application is now in order for allowance, and early review and allowance are requested.

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Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued
in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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